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CNN On The Pentagon's Roswell Press Conference (+

From: Stig_Agermose@online.pol.dk (Stig Agermose)
Date: Wed, 25 Jun 1997 02:14:52 +0200
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Found June 24 1997 at:
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The links are in brackets: =20

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Air Force says of Roswell: 'Case Closed'

Skeptics critical, despite military report

June 24, 1997

Web posted at: 4:48 p.m. EDT (2048 GMT)=20

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- So-called space aliens who supposedly crashed in the New Mexico desert 50 years ago were only military dummies used in high-altitude parachute drops, the Air Force said at a news conference Tuesday.=20

Officials showed a video at the Pentagon briefing to make its point, and released a 231-page report.

(Roswell Report Press Conference =20
VXtreme Streaming Video)

(Ejection seat test dummies=20
1M/26 sec. QuickTime movie)

Its findings immediately came under attack, and apparently was unlikely to end long-standing rumors that the government recovered bodies from damaged flying saucers near Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947, then covered up the incident.=20

>From the military's point of view, the title of the report tells it all: "The Roswell Report, Case Closed."=20

But when asked whether he thought the report "would put this whole thing to rest," Defense Department spokesman (Kenneth Bacon) replied: "Of course not."=20

Air Force Col. John Haynes, who presented the report at the Pentagon news conference, said its findings show that "air force activities which occurred over a period of many years have now been consolidated and are now represented to have occurred over two or three days in July 1947."=20

But skeptics said the parachute tests occurred years after the 1947

Roswell incident. The Air Force theorized that those who saw the dummies were confused over the dates.=20

Aliens or dummies?

Released a week before the Roswell incident's 50th anniversary, the report says the controversy began with reports of unusual activities near Roswell, which involved recovery operations of high-altitude research balloons.=20

In 1994, the Air Force issued a report on the so-called "Roswell incident" that said the "spacecraft" that supposedly crashed in the desert was an Air Force balloon used in a top-secret research program.=20

The report released Tuesday repeated that assertion. It explained that the so-called alien bodies witnesses reported seeing in the desert in separate incidents were test dummies that were carried aloft between 1954 and 1959 by Air Force balloons, then dropped attached to parachutes.=20

To make the point, the latest report includes photographs of human look-alike dummies and balloons being recovered.=20

The possibility of a government conspiracy to cover up an actual UFO sighting was ridiculed Tuesday by retired Air Force Col. Richard Weaver, who wrote the 1994 report.=20

"I don't think the government is capable of putting together a decent conspiracy," Weaver said during a TV appearance.=20

Skeptics challenge Pentagon version

Deon Crosby, director of the International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, said the report raises more questions than it answers.=20

She said pictures of the Air Force dummies look like mannequins and, if that's what they were, "What does it say about the people in the military who can't tell the difference between mannequins and bodies?"=20

Roswell has become an article of faith for those who believe in extraterrestrial life. Up to 100,000 people are expected to visit the town next week for the golden anniversary of the alleged alien landing.=20

But the Air Force said Tuesday that facts counter the speculation.=20

"This report is based on thoroughly documented research supported by official records, technical reports, film footage, photographs and interviews with individuals who were involved in these events," it says.=20

But the report is unlikely to sway hard-line believers in unidentified flying objects, or UFOs, from space and the few remaining witnesses to the Roswell event.=20

Witness insists he saw dead aliens

On July 7, 1947, the Roswell Army Air Field issued a news release saying it had a "flying disk" that had fallen, but the same evening an Air Force general in Fort Worth, Texas, said the craft was, in fact, a weather balloon.=20

Walter Haut, the army press officer who put out the first news release, says he still believes it was accurate.=20

One of the few living witnesses, Frank Kaufmann, now 81, insists he saw dead aliens put into body bags after their spacecraft crashed near the town 50 years ago.=20

At the time in 1947, he was a civilian employee at Roswell Army Air Field, and was sent to see what had crashed into a dry riverbed. Kaufmann said he got a close look at two bodies, one in the wreckage

and one slumped against a rock wall in the riverbed.=20

"They were very good-looking people, ash-colored faces and skin ... about 5 feet 5 (1.65 meters) tall, eyes a little more pronounced, small ears, small nose, fine features and hairless," he said. Kaufmann contends he saw military personnel place five corpses into body bags and remove them in jeeps.=20

Haynes said other incidents also may be adding to the confusion.=20

He said claims of bodies at the Roswell Army Air Field Hospital, which helped feed some of the speculation, were most likely a combination of two separate incidents: one in 1956 in which 11 Air Force personnel died in a KC-97 aircraft accident and the other in 1959 when two airmen were injured in a manned balloon mishap.
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The(Associated Press) contributed to this report.=20

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